Preparatory Committee for the 2020 Review Conference of the Parties to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons

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New Agenda Coalition comments on Draft Chair's factual summary (NPT/CONF.2020/PC.II/CRP.3)

Working paper submitted by New Zealand on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition*

Thank you Mr Chair.

I am taking the floor on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition, comprising Brazil, Egypt, Ireland, Mexico, South Africa and my own country New Zealand.

Our delegations would certainly wish to congratulate you on your chairmanship of this Second Preparatory Committee meeting. We are also grateful for your efforts, those of your team and of the Secretariat, in pulling together your draft factual summary in CRP.3. We recognise that your summary is submitted to this Conference under your own authority and that you have signalled that you do not intend to make any substantive changes to it.

We would, however, like to put on record our Coalition's key concerns with your text. As a general point, we note that it is important that your text fully reflect the range of views expressed by all delegations over the last two weeks here. In this regard:

- We note with concern the emphasis in paragraph 7 on the need to "safeguard gains" made under the NPT, inter alia, in disarmament. We are concerned, Mr Chair, that this might suggest that the primary focus of States Parties in going forward now on disarmament is to safeguard what has already been done. The NAC's view, mirrored we believe by the overwhelming majority of States Parties here, is that there have been insufficient gains in the NPT's disarmament pillar and that it is this which must be addressed urgently.
- Further, with regard still to paragraph 7, we note that there is a reference to the need to identify areas of common ground before pathways for the further implementation of the Treaty can be pursued. In fact, Mr Chair, pathways for further implementation of the Treaty have already been established and agreed to by all in 1995, 2000 and 2010.

* The present document is being issued without formal editing.

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- We note that paragraph 8 has a reference to the need to "create the conditions conducive to further nuclear disarmament". This is an area of considerable contention among NPT States Parties and should have included a reference to the opposition of a significant number of States Parties to such a reference. (One way to do so would have been along the lines of the final sentence in paragraph 14 which notes that a particular view was not shared by a group of states.)

- We regret that, in paragraph 12, the text of the unequivocal undertaking given by nuclear-weapon States has not been reflected fully. Here, the unequivocal undertaking has been reframed to take "into account the special responsibility of States possessing the largest nuclear arsenals". Instead, Mr Chair, we note that the unequivocal undertaking given in 2000, and reaffirmed in 2010, is "to accomplish the total elimination of their nuclear arsenals leading to nuclear disarmament to which all States Parties are committed under Article VI".

- In paragraph 19, Mr Chair, your placement of the word "some" when referencing "nuclear weapon States' modernisation programmes" suggests that there are some nuclear weapon modernisation programmes that are consistent with NPT undertakings and the object and purpose of the Treaty. Any such view is contested by many States Parties here.

- With respect to paragraph 29 regarding the operational status of nuclear weapon systems, we believe this language is unacceptably weak. Suggesting that nuclear weapon States were only called upon, "where possible", to further reduce alert levels does not reflect the strong calls made in this room for the de-alerting of nuclear weapons.

- We regret the omission in any of the four paragraphs dealing with nuclear testing and the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty to the importance of maintaining existing moratoriums on nuclear weapon test explosions pending the entry into force of that Treaty.

- Mr Chair, of deep concern to the NAC, is the lack of balance in the language referencing the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. There are two paragraphs dealing with this important Treaty. One paragraph (paragraph 41), notes that some States Parties expressed their opposition to the TPNW. In contrast, the other paragraph (paragraph 40) does not note the support of many, or indeed any, States for this Treaty. Instead, it simply notes the conclusion of the Treaty (without welcoming this) and notes that a number of States Parties provided information about its "ratification process and status".

- Further, the framing of the reference at the end of paragraph 40 to the intention of the TPNW to strengthen existing disarmament and non-proliferation regime is unacceptable. In fact, it was widely observed at this PrepCom that the TPNW will strengthen the NPT regime.

Mr Chair, we intend to submit these comments, which are delivered on behalf of the New Agenda Coalition, to the Secretariat in the form of a working document.

Thank you.